
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING
ON LAND AT
NORTH ROAD, GEDNEY HILL
LINCOLNSHIRE
(GHNC10)**

**Work Undertaken For
Deljon Properties**

December 2011

Report Compiled by
Liz Murray BA (Hons)

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City and County Museum Accession No: LCNCC:2010.83
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APS Report No: **143/11**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



**Quality Control
Archaeological Monitoring and Recording,
North Road,
Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire
(GHNC10)**

Project Coordinator	Dale Trimble
Supervisor	Alex Beeby, Andy Failes, Liz Murray
Illustration	Liz Murray
Photographic Reproduction	Sue Unsworth
Post-excavation Analyst	Liz Murray

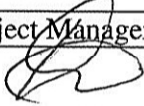
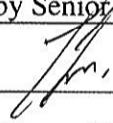
Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
Dale Trimble 	 Tom Lane
Date:	Date:

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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks at North Road, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire. The work monitored the initial phases of the excavation of a lake and three trial trenches across the area of it.

The monitoring was required as extensive remains of a Romano-British landscape are known from aerial photography in this area of the fens and appear to focus on Gedney Hill, which may have been an important centre in Roman times.

The work revealed a series of natural alluvial deposits, with no archaeological features. All of the trial trenches were devoid of archaeological features. No finds were recovered.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Deljon Properties to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with the creation of a lake and nature reserve at North Road, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application H07/0824/05. The watching brief was carried out intermittently between the 21st July 2010 and the 7th December 2011. Trial trenching was undertaken on the 6th and 7th December.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Gedney Hill is located 15km southeast of Spalding and 12km west of Wisbech in the South Holland district of Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located approximately 2.5km north of the village, on the west side of North Road, centred on National Grid Reference TF 3525 4671 (Figure 2).

The site lies in the fenland at approximately 2m OD. Soils at the site are coarse silty calcareous soils of the Wisbech Association (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 361). These soils overlie a drift geology of marine alluvium (generally sandy silt, sand and clay) which in turn seals a solid geology of Upper Jurassic clays (BGS 1992).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Extensive remains of a Romano-British landscape in this area of the fens are known from aerial photography and there is abundant evidence of salt production in that period from fieldwalking survey and a number of excavated sites.

Previous work in the area includes an archaeological evaluation on land further south on North Road. The programme of trial trenching uncovered a single gully of Romano-British date and several other undated ditches (Peachey 2004)

The area around Gedney Hill was reclaimed in 1241 and the present hamlet grew up thereafter being first recorded with the grant of a chantry, made by Margaret de Roos, in 1346 (Hallam 1965). The present settlement, approximately 2.5km south of the proposed development site, is centred on Holy Trinity Church which contains elements of 14th century date.

Cropmarks are known in the area with dense distributions occurring to the southwest and northwest of the village. The cropmarks are sparse immediately around the village but drove and ditch alignments suggest an important centre for the Roman fens (Phillips 1970). Roman coins were recorded from the village in the

18th century and Roman pottery has been identified in the area.

Cropmarks, as previously noted on aerial photographs, have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed development site with many extending into the site itself. These remains probably represent ditched boundaries and driveways but there is no evidence for intensive settlement or industry.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The initial stages of work involved the monitoring of the excavation of the perimeter of the lake, which was to be followed by the monitoring of the removal of the internal area. Following consultation with Louise Jennings, planning archaeologist from Lincolnshire County Council, the methodology for the archaeological investigation was altered. The internal area of the lake would be evaluated with several trial trenches around a central island that would remain *in situ*.

Three 30m x 2m trial trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator using a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket (Figure 3; Plates 4-7). Trenches were then cleaned as appropriate and sides rendered vertical where necessary. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10

or 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

The location of the excavated trenches was surveyed with an EDM in relation to fixed points on boundaries.

5. RESULTS

Following excavation the records were checked and phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

The deposits observed within the trenches reflect those found whilst excavating the perimeter. Contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit recorded on site was a reddish brown clayey silt, (004). This alluvial deposit was only observed in one location on the site, during the deep excavations of the perimeter, where the overlying deposit (003) was thinner and had been removed completely (Figure 6 – Section 6; Plate 3).

(003) was a plastic dark grey clay layer between 0.4m and 0.6m in depth. Frequent discrete areas of organic material, wood and plant matter, were evident within this layer along with occasional shell fragments (Figures 6 and 7).

This was sealed by a dark reddish brown and grey silty clay, up to 1m in thickness (005). This was also identified in the trial trenches (102=202=302) with all of them being excavated down to this deposit (Figure 7).

Extant across both the trenches and the perimeter area was a dark grey/blue brown silty clay subsoil (002=101=201=301), up to 0.3m in depth. Topsoil (001=100=200=300) was present across the entire area with the horizon between

this dark greyish brown silty clay and the subsoil below unclear.

6. DISCUSSION

The deposits observed on site comprise several layers of naturally formed alluvial deposits, overlain with a subsoil possibly formed by ploughing of the site.

Despite, the proximity of possible Romano-British features observed on aerial photographs there were no archaeological features observed on the site.

7. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out on land at North Road, Gedney Hill, prior to the excavation of a lake within a nature reserve development. Monitoring was required due to the presence of putative Romano-British features within the vicinity and across the site.

No archaeological features were observed or recorded within either the perimeter ditch excavated for the lake or the three trial trenches excavated across the remaining internal area. A series of natural alluvial deposits were recorded comprising the natural geology of the area.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Deljon Properties for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was co-ordinated by Dale Trimble who edited this report along with Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Dale Trimble

Site Supervisors: Andy Failes, Alex Beeby, Liz Murray

Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth

Illustration: Liz Murray

Post-excavation analysis: Liz Murray

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hallam, H.E., 1965, *Settlement and Society; A Study of the Early Agrarian History of South Lincolnshire*

Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbett, W.M., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S, 1984, *Soils and their uses in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales **13**

Peachey, M. 2004, *Archaeological Evaluation on land at North Road, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire (GHNRO4)* APS Report No. **16/04**

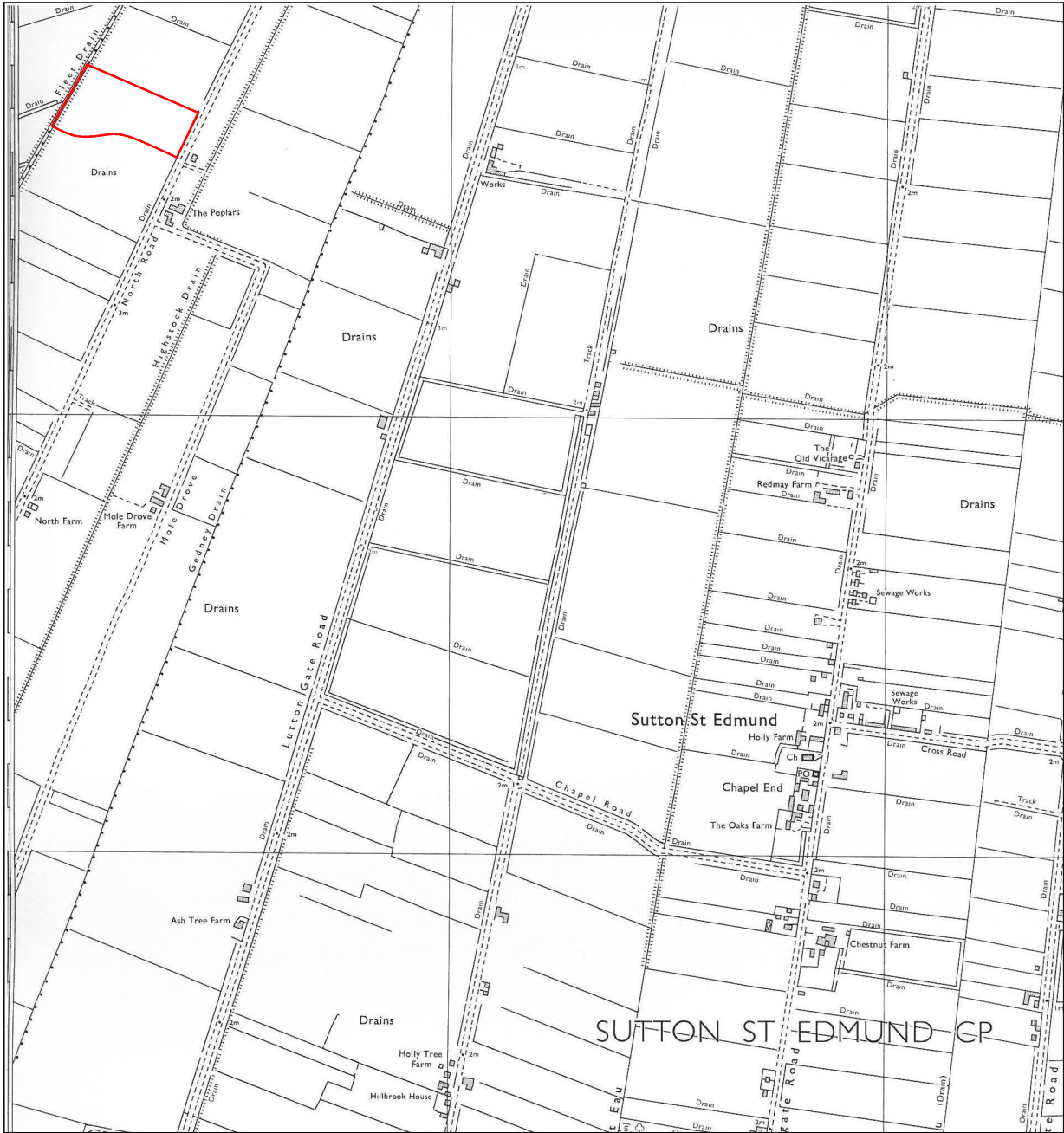
Phillips, C.W., 1970, *The Fenland in Roman Times*, Royal Geographical Society Research Series No. **5**.

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services



Figure 1 General Location Plan



TF



= site location

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Scale 1: 15000	Drawn by: LM	Report No: 143/11	

Figure 2 Site Location

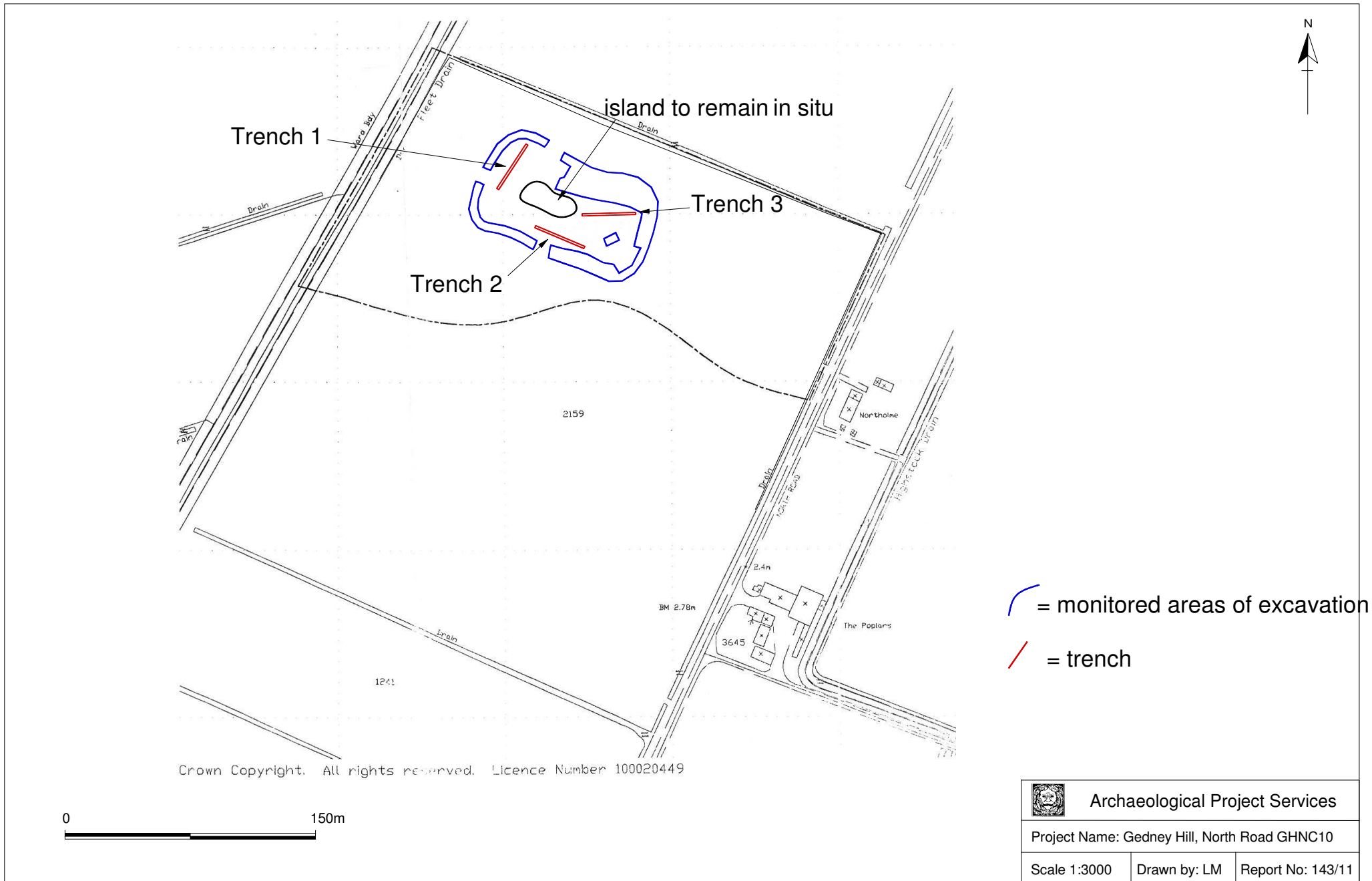
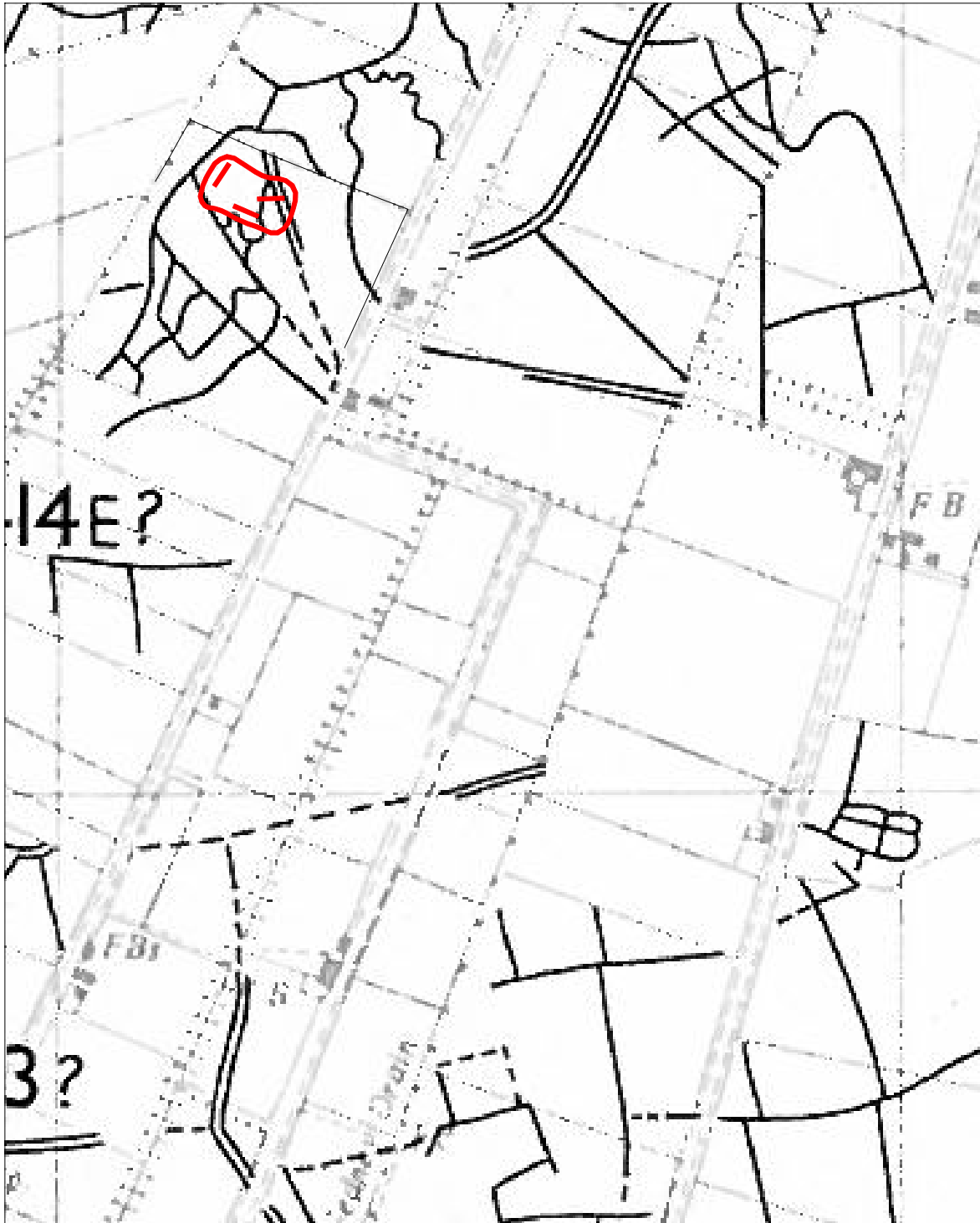



Figure 3: Site location with areas of monitoring



 = monitored areas of excavation

0  400m


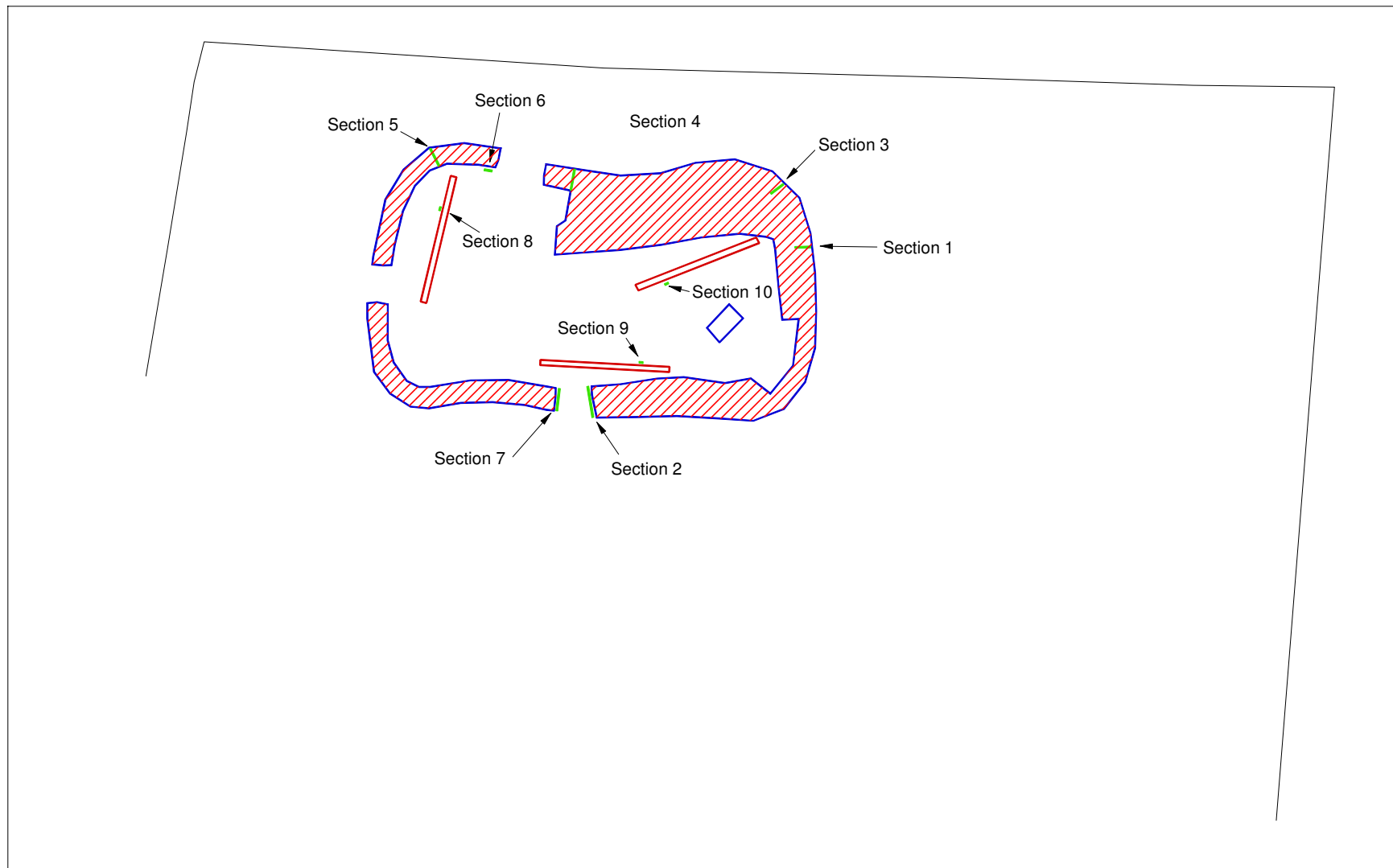


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Scale 1:7500	Drawn by: LM	Report No: 143/11

Figure 4 Cropmarks in area of site (after Fenland in Roman times)



 = monitored areas
 = section location


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Scale 1:1500	Drawn by: LM	Report No: 143/11

Figure 5 Location of sections

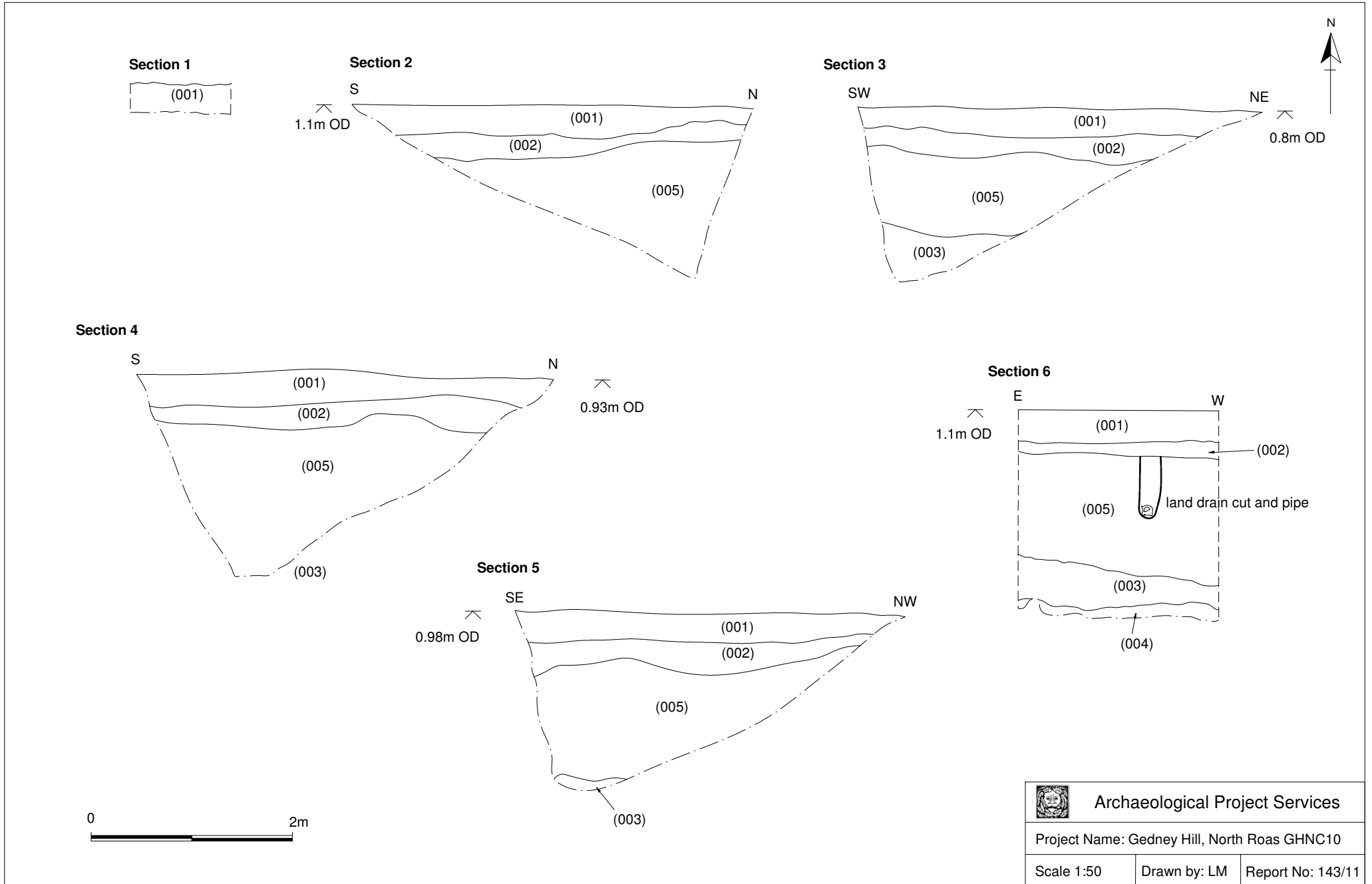


Figure 6 Sections 1-6

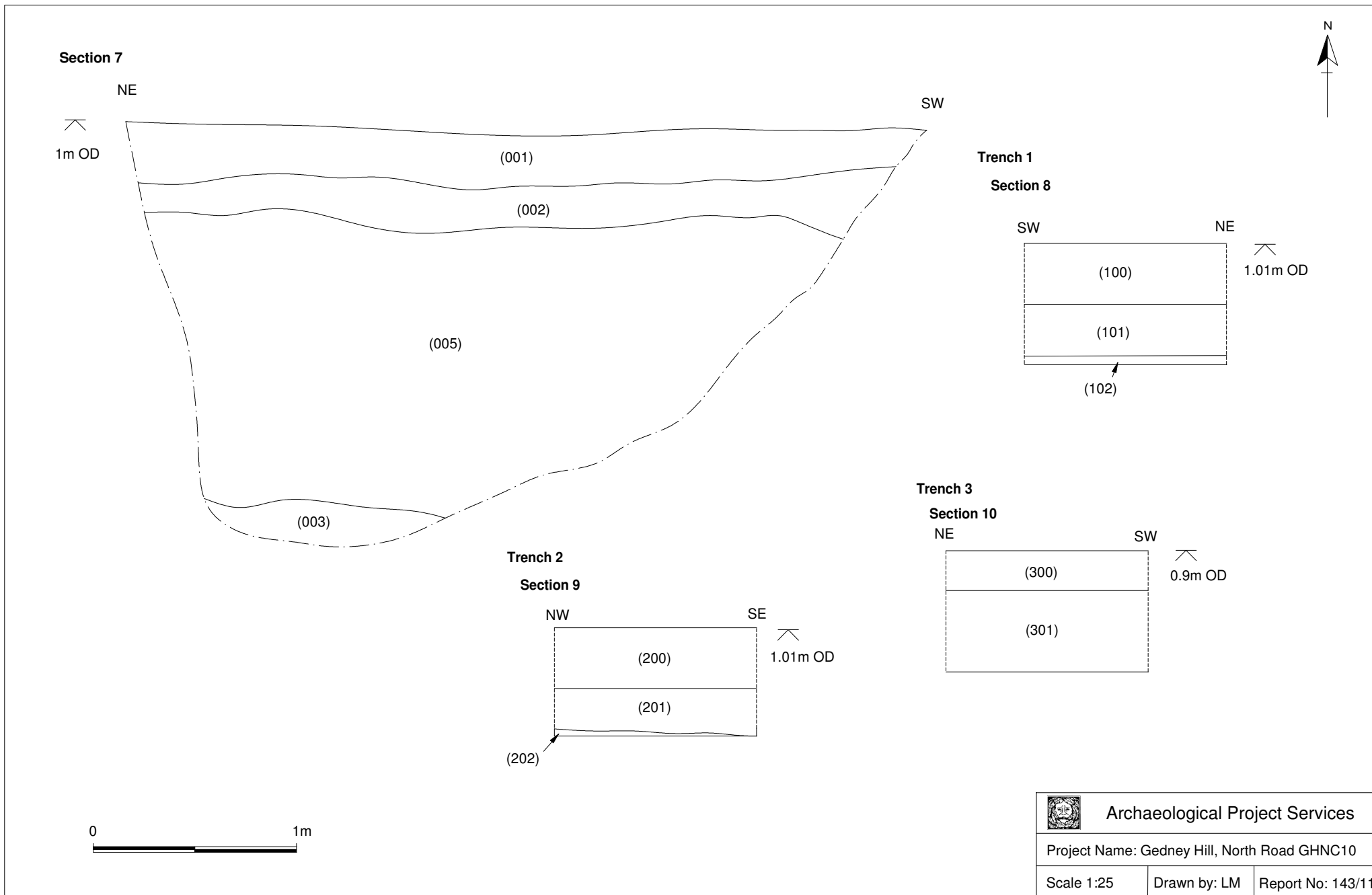



Figure 7 Sections 6 - 10

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Scale 1:25	Drawn by: LM	Report No: 143/11

Plates



Plate 1: Location of lake



Plate 2: Section of ditch dug around perimeter



Plate 3: Section 6 showing all deposits



Plate 4: Trench 1 - general shot



Plate 5: 1m representative section Trench 1



Plate 6: Trench 2 - general shot



Plate 7: Trench 3 - general shot

Appendix 1

CONTEXT SUMMARY

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
001	Pond perimeter	Firm to hard (baked), dark blue grey brown, silty clay. At least 0.3m thick	Topsoil
002	Pond perimeter	Firm, dark grey with blue and mid brown streaks, silty clay, up to 0.3m thick	Subsoil layer with possible alluvial contents, interface with topsoil very unclear
003	Pond perimeter	Plastic dark grey clay, organic content <15%, very occasional shell, 0.4 – 0.6m in thickness, thick sticky grey clay with organic matter	Clay layer, sealed by (005), very noticeable organic content in patches
004	Pond perimeter	Plastic/friable, reddish brown, clayey silt, thickness unknown, only observed in single area of site where (003) has been entirely removed	Alluvial clay/silt below marshy wetland surface layer (003)
005	Pond perimeter	Plastic/friable, dark red brown, silty clay, 25% silt, rare chalk, approximately 1m thick	Alluvial deposit overlies dark grey clay (003)
100	Trench 1	Friable, dark blue grey brown, silty clay, up to 0.3m in thickness	Topsoil same as (001)
101	Trench 1	Firm, dark grey with mid brown streaks, silty clay up to 0.2m in thickness	Subsoil, same as (002)
102	Trench 1	Plastic, dark red brown silty clay layer at least 50mm in thickness	Alluvial clay same as (005)
200	Trench 2	Firm, dark blue grey silty clay, 0.3m in thickness	Topsoil, same as (001)
201	Trench 2	Firm, dark grey with mid brown streaks, silty clay up to 0.2m in thickness	Subsoil, same as (002)
202	Trench 2	Plastic, dark red silty clay, observed in the base of the trench	Alluvial clay, same as (005)
300	Trench 3	Friable, dark blue grey brown, silty clay, up to 0.2m thick	Topsoil, same as (001)
301	Trench 3	Firm, dark grey with mid brown streaks, silty clay up to 0.2m in thickness	Subsoil, same as (002)
302	Trench 3	Plastic dark red brown and blue grey clay, at least 0.1m in thickness	Alluvial clay, same as (005)

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	Deposits laid down by water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea, and fresh water alluvium is laid down by rivers and in lakes.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> [004].
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Layer	A layer is an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

11	Context records
3	Trench record sheets
2	Photographic record sheet
1	Section record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
9	Daily record sheet
6	Sheets of scale drawings

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

The Collection
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

Accession Number

LCNCC:2010.83

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

GHNC10

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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